

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
INTERAGENCY BISON CONSERVATION WORKING GROUP
CHARTER

1. **Official Designation:** Interagency Bison Conservation Working Group (Working Group).
2. **Scope and Objective:** The Working Group will coordinate bison herd management and research within the Department and the Federal Government, encourage partnerships with States, tribes, landowners, and organizations interested in bison conservation, and promote public education about and involvement with bison conservation.
3. **Duration:** The Working Group is expected to exist into the foreseeable future.
4. **Official to Whom the Working Group Reports:** The Working Group reports to the Secretary through the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.
5. **Bureau Responsible for Providing Necessary Support:** Support services for activities of the Working Group will be provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service, alternating between bureaus on a 2-year basis.
6. **Estimated Operating Costs:** The Working Group will consist entirely of Federal and State employees, and the coordination activities now proposed to be undertaken by the group would likely be done individually or in some less formal manner by the member bureaus as part of their responsibilities related to bison conservation and management; as a result, total operating costs are estimated as not to exceed \$20,000 annually.
7. **Description of Duties:** The Working Group's duties include:
 - a. Coordination of policies, research efforts, and management practices:
 1. for DOI bison herds;
 2. with States, tribes, non-governmental organizations, and others interested in bison conservation; and
 3. with landowners, local officials, and others involved with or affected by bison herds managed for conservation purposes.
 - b. Development of a work plan bi-annually, with goals and objectives, having item (f) below as the first overall priority.
 - c. In Fiscal Year 2008, the Working Group will organize and convene a Genetic Conservation Workshop to develop bison genetic management guidelines.

- d. In Fiscal Year 2009, the Working Group should organize and convene a bison disease and health workshop to guide bison health management.
 - e. Active consultation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and tribal partners to determine the best way to coordinate and assist with tribal bison initiatives.
 - f. Actively seeking to coordinate opportunities to increase existing DOI herds to 1,000 or more bison, or to establish new herds or metapopulations that can reach that size, without impacts from non-native diseases and with little or no cattle allele introgression as determined through the outcomes and recommendations of the Genetics Summit.
 - g. Supporting the efforts of the Greater Yellowstone Interagency Brucellosis Committee (GYIBC), coordinating with the GYIBC, and offering advice and assistance as requested.
 - h. Actively supporting the development of tests to identify cattle gene introgression in individual bison as well as bison herds.
 - i. Coordinating development of guidance for disease surveillance and herd health monitoring programs for DOI herds where not already in place.
8. **Allowances:** None. Working Group members are all Federal or State employees and will receive no additional pay or allowances as a result of participating in the Working Group.
9. **Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings:** It is anticipated that the Working Group will meet at least once annually.
10. **Termination Date:** The need for the Working Group is likely to be on-going. It will be subject to renewal every 5 years, and will terminate 5 years from the date the charter is filed, unless, prior to that time, the charter is renewed.

11. Working Group Membership:

- a. The Working Group will consist of approximately 20 Federal members, of which five each shall be appointed by the Directors of the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Directors of U.S. Geological Survey, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Bureau of Land Management will appoint one each.
- b. The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies will be requested to designate one employee of a State Fish and Wildlife Agency from a State in which bison are found to represent bison States' wildlife agencies.
- c. The Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs shall designate one employee to serve as Tribal liaison for the Working Group.

- d. The Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture, shall be invited to appoint one member from among employees of that Agency involved in bison health activities.
 - e. The Chief of the National Forest Service shall be invited to appoint one member from among employees of the Forest Service.
 - f. The Secretary of Defense shall be invited to appoint one member from employees of the Department, or members of the Armed Services, to represent Defense land management.
 - g. The Working Group shall be chaired by the designee of the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.
 - h. The Assistant Secretary, Land and Minerals Management may designate one representative from his office to serve on the Working Group.
12. **Subcommittees:** The Working Group may establish such subcommittees as it deems necessary. Such subcommittees must report to the full Working Group and consist only of Federal or State employees.
13. **Authority:** The Working Group is established in furtherance of the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act (16 U.S.C. 668dd-ee), National Park Service Organic Act (16 U.S.C. 1 et. seq.), Federal Land Management and Policy Act (43 U.S.C. 1701 et. sec.) and provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a - 742j).


Secretary of the Interior

OCT 09 2008

Date Signed

Date Filed

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
TRANSMITTAL

Review Office	Initials		
_____ Secretary	_____	Accession Number	373588 MF
_____ Deputy Secretary	_____	Transmittal Date	09/18/2008
_____ Chief of Staff	_____	Print Date	09/18/2008
_____ Deputy Chief of Staff	_____	SIGMAC Auth	
_____ Executive Secretariat	_____	_____	Dirk Kempthorne
_____	_____	_____	Dirk

Addressee: Dirk Kempthorne

Author: Lavery, Lyle

Subject: United States Department of the Interior Interagency Bison Conservation Working Group Charter.

Response: Requesting Secretary signature on a Charter establishing the Interagency Bison Conservation Working Group.

Actual Surnames:

- FW-Lavery
- FW-Bowman
- FW-Arha
- NPS-Wenk
- BIA-Gidner
- BLM-Roberson
- FWS-Gould
- WS-Petty
- SOL-Roth

Response Office
FW

Response Person
Lyle Lavery

Response Phone

Mailing Instructions:

W/ for 9/18 @ 1:10 pm

*Signed 10/9
& return
to FW/T-Inwin
copies provided
to: ocl/Garnes
ocm/Caughey
oco/Kreisher*